

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.318
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THE UNIVERSITY
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COLLECTION

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 1 August 1967, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. N. ECOBESCO (Romania)

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA
Mr. A. da COSTA GUIMARAES

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV
Mr. D. KOSTOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG

Canada:

Mr. C.J. MARSHALL
Mr. J.R. MORDEN
Mr. A. BERNIER

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. B. ASSFAW

India:

Mr. V.C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K.P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. A. FANFANI
Mr. R. CARACCILO
Mr. E. BETTINI
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

Mexico:

Mr. J. CASTANEDA
Miss E. AGUIRRE

Nigeria:

Alhaji SULE KOLO
Mr. B.O. TONWE

Poland:

Mr. J. GOLDBLAT
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

Romania:

Mr. N. ECOBESCO
Mr. O. IONESCO
Mr. C. GEORGESCO
Mr. A. COROIANU

Sweden:

Mr. A. EDELSTAM
Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN
Mr. V.P. SUSLOV
Mr. V.V. SHUSTOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. KHALLAF
Mr. M. SHAKER

United Kingdom:

Mr. I.F. PORTER
Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER
Mr. G. BUNN
Mr. C. GLEYSTEN
Mr. G. BREAM

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Romania) (translation from French): I declare open the three hundred and eighteenth plenary meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.
2. May I be allowed, on behalf of the delegations participating in the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and as Chairman of this meeting, to welcome very cordially among us His Excellency Mr. Amintore Fanfani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic? I think I am reflecting the sentiment of all of us in expressing my conviction **that** the presence among us of His Excellency, Mr. Amintore Fanfani, an eminent personality whose activity in behalf of disarmament and security is well known to us all, is likely to stimulate the efforts directed towards the achievement of just and durable agreements that are in accordance with the interests of the international community and world peace.
3. As the representative of my country I have pleasure in greeting, in the person of Minister Amintore Fanfani, the distinguished representative of a country with which Romania maintains friendly relations in accordance with a tradition of long standing, relations which are becoming ever more extensive and which are reflected in a positive way in the life of the two peoples in the cause of peace and understanding in Europe.
4. Mr. FANFANI (Italy) (translation from French): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to address to you, as well as to all the members of the Committee, my most cordial greetings and my thanks for your kind words, and to tell you how much the Italian Government appreciates the important and delicate work which this Committee is carrying out in the interest of world peace.
5. The events of these past months have demonstrated once again that peace is a patrimony of inestimable value which must be maintained and defended at all costs and the preservation of which calls for constant vigilance. These events have also shown, thanks to the action of the United Nations and to the debates at the special session of the General Assembly, the force and sincerity with which all the countries of the world wish to ensure the re-establishment of normal relations based on confidence among the peoples.
6. My presence today at this meeting, after our meeting two years ago on 29 July 1965, is evidence of the value that Italy attributes to the work of the Committee, of the confidence with which the Italian Government follows your patient and tenacious efforts, and of the primary importance that Italy attaches to the problems of universal peace and, in particular, to the problem of disarmament in all its forms.

(Mr. Fanfani, Italy)

7. During our meeting two years ago I had the opportunity of expounding certain ideas which preceded our proposal for a nuclear moratorium (ENDC/157) and which received attention, for which I am grateful, from various governments and United Nations bodies. Referring to the negotiations on a draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, I then stated that if it were not possible to prepare a draft treaty on nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time, the Italian delegation would reserve the right to appeal to the non-nuclear countries to take an initiative which would fix a certain period for a moratorium on the possible dissemination of nuclear weapons, it being understood that if no agreement of nuclear disarmament was reached they would resume their freedom of action (ENDC/PV.219, pp.18, 19).

8. Since then several important events have taken place. These events are the most convincing proof of the general desire to seek a solution to the various problems of disarmament and, in particular, to the problem of nuclear disarmament. Allow me to quote some significant examples: the submission to the Committee on 17 August 1965 of a United States draft treaty on non-proliferation (ENDC/152); the submission to the same Committee on 14 September 1965 of the Italian proposal for a nuclear moratorium (ENDC/157); the presentation on 24 September 1965 at the twentieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, of a Soviet draft treaty on non-proliferation (ENDC/164); the adoption on 19 November of the same year of General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) (ENDC/161), which invited all States to envisage urgently the conclusion of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, for which it indicated to them certain basic principles; the approval on 17 November 1966 of General Assembly resolution 2153-A (XXI) (ENDC/185), expressing the conviction that no effort should be spared to arrive at a treaty acceptable to all States and at the same time beneficial to the international community; the signing on 27 January 1967 of the treaty on the exploration and peaceful utilization of outer space (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI)); the signing on 14 February 1967 of the treaty of Tlatelolco on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America (ENDC/186); and lastly the intense activity pursued during these past months through diplomatic channels with a view to the submission of a new draft treaty the text of which is to be the result of the efforts of the two co-Chairmen of this Committee.

(Mr. Fanfani, Italy)

9. All these events indicate how active the countries concerned -- and in the first place those represented in Geneva -- have been in the face of the dramatic imperative to resolve urgently the general problem of disarmament and to take appropriate measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They also show up clearly the fact that we have not yet succeeded in preparing a truly effective draft treaty to which the great majority of countries could adhere.

10. The Italian Government wishes to recall once again that it is resolutely favourable to the conclusion of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This attitude has been reaffirmed on several occasions before the Italian Parliament and during bilateral meetings, as well as in this very forum. With a view to such an agreement, the Italian Government has pledged itself to bring to the attention of the Parliament the concrete draft treaty that will be submitted to this Committee. During the discussions and contacts established with a view to elaborating drafts for a non-proliferation treaty, the Italian Government has endeavoured to harmonize its ideas and suggestions with the resolutions approved by the United Nations. The policy of the Italian Government in this field is, furthermore, well known to the Eighteen-Nation Committee. It has favoured unremittingly for years the conclusion of a treaty that would be as perfect as possible and based on a balance of obligations and responsibilities without any discriminations other than those inherent in the present situation.

11. An ideal non-proliferation treaty should meet, among others, the following conditions: that of safeguarding the security of countries which voluntarily renounce nuclear weapons; that of recognizing the legitimate aspirations -- which they cannot renounce -- of all countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to the technical and industrial progress resulting therefrom; that of not thwarting the efforts carried on by Europe with a view to attaining the objectives of unification and consolidation of existing common institutions; that of not hindering the as yet unknown possibilities of progress in science, technology and the economy of States through too rigid legal formulas of unlimited duration; and lastly, that of directing the nuclear countries towards practical and concrete measures of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Fanfani, Italy)

12. I wished to sketch the broad outline of an ideal non-proliferation treaty, first to enable further improvements to be made in the existing drafts, secondly to renew an ardent appeal to reason and understanding, and lastly to recall that our moratorium proposal of 1965 was inspired in its simplicity by the aforementioned aims.
13. When on 29 July 1965 in this very room I explained the ideas which were subsequently to be embodied in the moratorium proposal, we were on the eve of the submission of a draft treaty. Indeed, the latter was submitted some twenty days later. Today it seems -- and it is to be hoped -- that we are on the eve of the submission of another draft treaty. We are waiting for it. We are all waiting for it in the hope that, particularly in the present international situation, it may contribute effectively to progress on the road to disarmament, to the relaxation of tension, and to peace.
14. In the same spirit which led me two years ago to put forward the idea of a moratorium, I should like to tell you today that, precisely because of the importance we attribute to a well-balanced and effective treaty, no effort should be spared to make progress with other collateral disarmament measures, especially if they are likely to encourage adherence to the draft treaty. I therefore wonder whether it would not be possible to imagine some proposal which, while linked up with measures examined in the past, might respond to certain imperatives important for all of us and more particularly for the non-nuclear Powers that have undertaken the negotiation of the treaty.
15. This proposal could be independent of the treaty, linked with or even incorporated in it according to circumstances; it could consist of an agreement under which the nuclear Powers would transmit periodically to the non-nuclear States signatories to the treaty an agreed quantity of the fissile materials they produce. The principle motivating such an agreement has already met with the approval of the United States and the Soviet Union when they examined in 1964 the well-known proposal for a "cut-off" (ENDC/120) -- that is, a discontinuance of the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons --; but it was not followed up because of the difficulties encountered in connexion with the question of control. It represented, however, an expression of the will to achieve disarmament, an expression of will to which it would perhaps be opportune to revert today.

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16. An agreement of this kind would indirectly subject the production of nuclear weapons by the militarily-nuclear States to a brake consisting in the necessity of allocating part of their fissile materials to non-nuclear countries for peaceful uses.

17. Within the same context, the non-nuclear countries to which the fissile materials transferred by the nuclear Powers would be assigned should pay a reduced price compared to the market value. Whereas part of this price would go to the nuclear producing Powers, the other part could be paid into the United Nations funds for the progress of the developing countries.

18. The agreement thus proposed could also lay down the principles of the distribution of fissile materials among the beneficiary countries. As for control, one could refer to the provisions of the non-proliferation treaty. I wish to stress the link that exists in this proposal between the brake on nuclear armament, the encouragement of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the aid given to the social and economic progress of the developing countries.

19. This initiative, of which I have sketched the broad outline, would also be a gesture of goodwill made by the nuclear Powers to prove their willingness to give up part of their fissile materials and to put a brake, even a modest one, on the continuous growth of their military nuclear potential. This initiative would provide them with the means of counterbalancing renunciation by the non-nuclear countries, which would not fail to encourage concrete measures to fill the technological gap, such as those that were envisaged in an Italian proposal put forward last year. The initiative which we suggest would enable the nuclear countries to establish an ideal link between disarmament measures and the progress of developing areas, in conformity with the appeal of His Holiness Pope Paul VI and the Italian proposal made in 1965 at the United Nations General Assembly and renewed at Geneva in this Committee.

20. Lastly, if the transfer of fissile materials would benefit only the non-nuclear countries signatories to the non-proliferation treaty, the idea which I have just explained to you would favour the accession to this treaty of the greatest possible number of non-nuclear countries by providing an appreciable material and moral compensation for their renunciation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Fanfani, Italy)

21. If the Committee agrees that this idea is interesting, the Italian delegation could easily develop it for the purposes of the Conference in a document which might prove useful in expectation of a draft treaty, or even in its preparation, or in supplementing it. The important need is to spare no effort in the search for ideas, formulas and solutions that will enable progress to be made in the specific field of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as in the other more general but no less important field of collateral measures. In about a month and a half from now the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly will be resumed in New York. It is necessary and timely that the General Assembly should be in a position, thanks to the work of this Committee, to give its directives for the achievement of the fruitful and constructive progress for which we hope in all fields of disarmament.

22. In thanking you, Mr. Chairman, and through you all the members of the Committee, for allowing me to make known once again in this forum the position of the Italian Government, I take the opportunity afforded me by this new meeting between us to assure all the representatives, and in particular the two co-Chairmen, of our very great appreciation of the contribution made by their ideas and suggestions to the work of this Conference.

23. Two years ago I concluded my statement by expressing complete confidence in the "spirit of Geneva". I renew the hope that your efforts, to which the peoples and governments attach so great an importance, will be able, particularly in this period of continuing conflicts and unresolved crises, to bring the dialogue on disarmament to the desired conclusions and results so that men can begin again to hope for other solutions than destruction and war.

24. The CHAIRMAN (Romania) (translation from French): I thank His Excellency Mr. Amintore Fanfani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, for the very important statement which he has made.

25. Mr. GOLDBLAT (Poland): I should like to join you, Mr. Chairman in welcoming the very distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mr. Fanfani. His presence among us here today and the address which he has just made confirm Italy's profound interest in disarmament. My delegation will study carefully his important statement.

(Mr. Goldblat, Poland)

26. When we spoke here on 6 June (ENDC/PV.302), we refrained from dealing at length with the need for and the urgency of a non-proliferation agreement. We were convinced that the overwhelming majority of States which had supported successive United Nations resolutions calling for such an agreement -- and had done so in good faith -- shared our views on the subject. The discussion in the Committee has not weakened that conviction of ours. True, we have heard a few remarks and suggestions with regard to some aspects of the non-proliferation treaty with which we should find it difficult to concur; but we are satisfied that they have been motivated chiefly by a desire to ensure speedy progress in disarmament and not by a set purpose to stultify the proposition itself. There appears, nevertheless, to be some lingering doubt, or rather misunderstanding, about who would benefit from a non-proliferation treaty. In my brief intervention today I should like, with your permission, to comment on that question.

27. It is natural and legitimate that each government, before signing or acceding to an international agreement, carefully weighs all pros and cons while bearing in mind the basic interest of its people. It also goes without saying that in so doing responsible government leaders would not disregard the interest of the world community as a whole. For national interest and international responsibility are not mutually exclusive; they could and should complement and be brought into harmony with each other. That approach applies with even greater force to disarmament agreements, which by their very nature touch upon the most sensitive issue -- that of national and international security. I believe that the difficulties we have encountered in disarmament negotiations in the past have been to a great extent attributable to the fact that the measures proposed and discussed were considered unacceptable by one side or the other for security reasons.

28. Now, if a ban on the further spread of nuclear weapons is generally described as the measure most ripe for solution, it is so, to our minds, precisely because it meets to the maximum extent possible the requirements of security of all States. This should not be taken to mean that a non-proliferation treaty is the only or the last disarmament measure to possess such characteristics. We must insist that other measures, equally fair and advantageous to all States, should follow. We do not share the scepticism or the apprehensions of those who suggest that a treaty preventing nuclear proliferation might generate a state of complacency inhibiting further moves. Rather the reverse is closer to the truth, as the representative of Bulgaria rightly pointed out at our last meeting, when he said:

"Establishment by the treaty of the idea of non-proliferation means that at the same time another concept of the greatest importance comes to be established by an international instrument -- that of nuclear disarmament, of which the treaty will be the first step". (ENDC/PV.317, para. 19)

(Mr. Goldblat, Poland)

29. However, reverting to the main topic of my intervention, let me substantiate the contention that a non-proliferation treaty would be beneficial to all States. Take the case of the present nuclear-weapon countries and in particular the so-called super-Powers, who have repeatedly assured us of their willingness and readiness to conclude the treaty. It is common knowledge that those Powers have accumulated such enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons and have reached such levels of sophistication in these that the emergence of a new nuclear-weapon State could not constitute a threat to them. It would even seem unthinkable to compete with them in this field; first, because they were the first to embark upon the manufacture of nuclear bombs and have thus acquired an edge of more than twenty years over other countries; secondly, because they possess unrivalled economic, technical and scientific resources; and last but not least, because geography is on their side.

30. Nor should they fear the diminishing of their political influence. They would enjoy the same position as they occupy in the world today whether or not they had developed nuclear arsenals in addition to their other military establishments. As a matter of fact, their outstanding role was universally recognized even before they had harnessed the atom for military uses. The Charter of the United Nations, worked out and signed before the Hiroshima and Nagasaki explosions, accorded special rights and responsibilities to the States which happen now to be the nuclear-weapon States.

31. It stands to reason, therefore, that it cannot be fear of competition that lies behind the interest of the super-Powers in a non-proliferation treaty. It is rather awareness of the stark reality that, unless the spread of nuclear weapons is checked, the risk of a nuclear outbreak by accident or by design will continue to grow -- not because of the leaders of small countries are less rational or less responsible than the leaders of large countries but because a simple mathematical calculation would prove that the greater the number of States possessing and controlling nuclear weapons, the greater the probability of those weapons being fired. Furthermore, it is hard to imagine a nuclear war remaining localized or limited. Once a bomb goes off the whole destructive arsenal may go, with dire and predictable consequences for the belligerents, and not only the belligerents.

32. This brings me to the case of non-nuclear-weapon States. If a nuclear war would inflict devastation on large countries, it would certainly cause the utter annihilation of the smaller ones. Even if a State were not directly involved in

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the hostilities and did not experience the immediate effects of a nuclear attack, it would none the less suffer as a result of deadly radioactive fall-out. Do not the interests of nuclear- and non-nuclear weapon Powers coincide on this point?

I think Mr. Mulley was perfectly right when he said that we were all on the same side in seeking to limit the risks of nuclear war (ENDC/PV.307, para. 13).

33. However, there is still more to it. In many regions of our troubled world the main concern of non-nuclear-weapon States is to prevent their non-nuclear-weapon neighbours, especially hostile neighbours, from attaining a position of strength, be it even for a short period of time, through the acquisition of nuclear weapons. The atmosphere of uncertainty about the intentions of rival States, in particular when those States have the technical capability of producing the bomb, breeds suspicion and mistrust, gives rise to accusations and recriminations, develops tensions and acute antagonisms which can easily lead to armed conflicts. An international arrangement by which the nuclear Powers would pledge themselves not to transfer nuclear weapons and the non-nuclear States would commit themselves not to manufacture such weapons would no doubt remove one of the root causes of the present state of strained relations among a number of countries. That would be yet another contribution of the non-proliferation treaty to the cause of peace.

34. We should thus all gain. In any event, nobody can argue with conviction that the non-nuclear-weapon countries would be lesser beneficiaries. If anything, the opposite would be more correct. It was hardly accidental that non-nuclear-weapon States, not even belonging to any of the military alliances and not enjoying so-called nuclear protection, were among the most ardent proponents of the non-proliferation idea. The representative of Czechoslovakia, in his thought-provoking statement last week (ENDC/PV.316), referred to certain facts from the past which are pertinent to the point I am trying to make. I shall therefore forgo its further elaboration.

35. We do not deny that the treaty will not ensure complete security either to nuclear- or to non-nuclear-weapon countries. But is that, may I ask, really the aim of the treaty? Would that not be too much to ask from an agreement the aim of which is limited only to the prevention of the spread of nuclear "evil"? -- if I may again borrow from Mr. Winkler's words (ENDC/PV.316, para. 7). A non-proliferation treaty is, after all, not meant to be a substitute for general and complete disarmament. Nor is it meant to replace the United Nations Charter. Consequently

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it cannot solve all our problems, provide a fool-proof guarantee for world peace, or remove all the obstacles to an effective world-wide security system.

36. One would be more justified in asking whether the sense of security of a non-nuclear-weapon State would increase if it decided to turn nuclear. Let us consider such an eventuality. A decision by any further nation to acquire nuclear weapons would inevitably bring about a fundamental change in its international relations. Non-nuclear-weapon neighbours might be tempted either to undertake immediate preventive action in order to nip the nascent military nuclear industry in the bud, or to acquire nuclear weapons too. A regional nuclear arms race might then follow, and the presumed advantage of the State which initiated it would be quickly levelled off. Besides, the deployment of nuclear weapons, while converting a country into a direct target for nuclear attack, would not even enable that country to dispense with conventional arms. As a result, major economic and technological burdens would be added to the existing ones and would gravely jeopardize the internal stability of the nation concerned. The search for more security might in fact end in increased insecurity.

37. That is why one cannot regard renunciation of nuclear weapons by a non-nuclear-weapon State as a sacrifice or a magnanimous gesture, unless one proceeds from the wrong premises. Those who have hitherto of their own free will refrained from entering the nuclear club and who would, under a non-proliferation treaty, again of their own free will, undertake a legal obligation to remain non-nuclear, are fully conscious of their vital national interests; for renunciation of nuclear weapons is, in the circumstances, a means of self-defence for non-nuclear-weapon countries, a way of strengthening their security in the nuclear age.

38. Those considerations lie behind the ideas which the Government of Poland has been advocating to ensure security in Europe. Those very considerations explain the popularity of the concept of denuclearization. We are all agreed that a non-proliferation treaty is not an end in itself; but we are also agreed that it is an essential stage, the one we have to go through before we start dealing with other disarmament measures. Let us, then, settle first things first.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 318th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador N. Ecobesco, representative of Romania.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Italy and Poland.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 3 August 1967, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.